

Commentary

Word on the Street

What are you currently reading or is there a favorite book you've read more than once?



I've read "Once an Eagle," by Anton Myrer a couple times. He's written about 10 books. It's a good novel even if you've never been in the Army. I like its descriptiveness and the characters.

Paul DeVries
Army retiree



"The Magnificient Ambersons" by Booth Tarkington. It's about a wealthy family after the Civil War. The old man made a lot of money but it's never explained how. There's the development of the horseless wagon. It's about a simpler time.

David Barry
retired Army



I've got a couple of books going right now. "One Christmas in Washington" describes the first meeting between FDR and Churchill in 1941 before the war.

Bob Cooper
retired Army



I've read "Of Mice and Men" about ten times. I love the story ... George taking care of Lenny. I've got a couple of friends who are like that.

Spc. Kevin Nesbitt
Old Guard



I've read "The Hunt for Red October" about 10 times. I've seen the movie with Pierce Brosnan several times too. It's the plot that brings me back.

Todd Hopkins
Youth Services

Bond of wounded defies age

by Capt. Sean Meadows
American Forces Press Service

"Hey doc, when am I going upstairs? Hey doc, this bed is uncomfortable, when am I going to be admitted?"

A feisty elderly gentleman we'll call Morris (name changed for confidentiality) was in Bed 3 of Brooke Army Medical Center in Texas, one of the busiest emergency departments in the military. He kept a constant barrage of running commentary on how long he had been waiting to go upstairs to complete his chest pain work up.

Morris was an 80-year-old retired World War II veteran. After I had spent a grueling afternoon shift seeing dozens of sick and injured people of all ages, his relentless haranguing was wearing me out.

I am a second-year resident in a three-year training program in emergency medicine. And that day, this man's incessant jawing had me at the point of exasperation. Then, like it has many times before, the arrival of troops wounded in Iraq changed the mood in the department.

The constant chatter and hum of a busy emergency department halted in an instant as soon as the doors opened. The sight of bandaged and burned Soldiers brought in on field stretchers accompanied by flight docs and medics wearing desert camouflage

brought conversation to a standstill.

You could hear the whispers: "Are those guys from Iraq?"

Previously summoned specialists arrived in droves to get these Soldiers, Airmen and Marines admitted or taken to operating rooms. The whole hospital hums with activity when a transport comes in. No one ever wants to be remembered as the one who didn't give aid and comfort to a wounded comrade.

Battle-hardened desert veterans, as well as those not yet tested, surround the newly arrived with greetings and encouragement. Some well-intentioned family member of a patient in the department went out to the waiting room to spread the news of wounded Soldiers in the department.

People waiting with sniffles and minor complaints looked embarrassed when they heard the news, some left. Complaints about wait times usually don't happen on days like this.

Some startled patients stared with visible discomfort at the sight of war wounded. The nurses and techs closed the curtains to raise a shield of privacy for the wounded Soldiers and normalcy returned to the emergency department.

My trance of observation was broken by the

See **Wounded** page 14

Cyber Patrol

Careless use of keyboards can kill

by Ed Beemer
Army News Service

Fewer people would know about a deployment or operation if you screamed it out at the Super Bowl than if you posted it on a Web log or blog.

Common sense will tell you not to discuss sensitive subjects on the streets of Baghdad. The same common sense should apply on the highways of cyberspace. Soldiers need to keep this in mind, not only because it is the right thing to do, but because it could land them in a world of trouble.

The technology of communication is a double-edged sword and often the sharper edge is being used against you. There have been too many instances of sensitive information being made public. For example one officer posted a picture of his tactical operations center or TOC, complete with secret documents showing troop rotations.

Another Soldier in theater posted when his unit's laundry runs were. That information has IED opportunity written all over it.

The list of what should not be posted on an unsecured site or sent via unsecured communication channels is almost endless. It includes the obvious like troop movements, operational details, temporary duty, planning issues and any classified material. But it also includes any personal information — information that could be used to put you, your fellow Soldiers or even your own family at risk.

This is also a matter of situational awareness; knowing what seemingly innocent information could be useful to the enemy. Each unit's operational security professional needs to advise supervisors on means to prevent the release of sensitive information.

But every Soldier, regardless of rank and position, has a personal responsibility to safeguard what

makes it onto the Internet. To ensure sensitive and unauthorized information is not posted, check with your immediate supervisor for approval before your next blog entry or site update. More information on operational security can be found at https://opsec.1stiocmd.army.mil/io_portal/Public/Pages/Sections.cfm?Section=Opsec

This is a very serious matter and the fallout from even one instance of releasing unauthorized information can be severe. Senior Army commanders have clearly stated that the Army must hold people accountable that place others at risk.

Relevant punitive measures are spelled out in AR 25-2 and are worth a thorough reading.

Soldiers have been fined and demoted because of information put on a blog that could have helped the enemy. But the consequences of allowing mission and personal information to get out is more dangerous than simply running the risk of a fine; It could get your fellow Soldiers killed and even put your family members in harm's way.

Psychologically, keeping information tightly guarded is a challenge, especially for Soldiers in a wartime environment a long way from friends and family. There is a great urge to connect and let people know what is going on.

Often it seems just a little bit of information can't hurt. Everyone needs to remember there are many ears and eyes focusing on these little pieces of information.

A terrorist manual found in Afghanistan stated, 80 percent of information gathered on the enemy — you — is gathered openly! The technical abilities, resourcefulness, patience and determination of enemy operatives cannot be underestimated — watch what you blog!

(Information provided by the G6 Information Assurance Office.)